AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions and listings of claims in the application:

Listing of claims:

1. (currently amended) A method of making an annular rubber component of a tire comprising

determining a cross sectional shape of an annular rubber component,

allotting thicknesses and widths to unvulcanized rubber strips, based on said determined cross sectional shape of the annular rubber component which is formed by ~~piling up~~disposing said unvulcanized rubber strips having the allotted thicknesses and widths upon one another, said thicknesses being in a range of from 0.5 to 4.0 mm,

determining relative displacement of circumferential ends of said unvulcanized rubber strips, ~~and~~

making a layered structure of said unvulcanized rubber strips by disposing said unvulcanized rubber strips upon one another so that the circumferential ends of said unvulcanized rubber strips have the determined relative displacement, wherein

the first circumferential ends on one side of the layered structure are gradually shifted from a radially innermost strip to a radially outermost strip, and the second circumferential ends on

the other side of the layered structure are gradually shifted in the reversed manner to the first circumferential ends,

winding said ~~unvulcanized rubber strips on a cylindrical surface~~ layered structure once around a drum, and

connecting the circumferential ends of the wound layered structure to each other by butt joint the first circumferential ends with the second circumferential ends, respectively, so that ~~the ends of each said unvulcanized rubber strip are jointed, and~~ the joints of said unvulcanized rubber strips are shifted from each other in the circumferential direction; and wherein

an angle α defining the angular circumferential shift between the joints of the adjacent unvulcanized rubber strips in the annular rubber component is at least 5 degrees, and

an angle β defining the angular circumferential shift between the joint of the radially innermost unvulcanized rubber strip and the joint of the radially outermost unvulcanized rubber strip and encompassing the joints is at most 180 degrees.

2. (canceled)

3. (currently amended) A method of making a tire rubber component according to claim 1 ~~or 2~~, wherein

said unvulcanized rubber strips include two or more unvulcanized rubber strips which are different from each other with respect to rubber composition.

4. (previously presented) A method of making a tire rubber component according to claim 1, wherein the tire rubber component is a tread rubber or a sidewall rubber, and the thicknesses of the unvulcanized rubber strips are in a range of from 0.5 to 2.0 mm.

5. (previously presented) A method of making a tire rubber component according to claim 1, wherein the tire rubber component is a bead apex rubber, and the thicknesses of the unvulcanized rubber strips are in a range of from 0.5 to 4.0 mm.

6. (currently amended) A method of making a pneumatic tire ~~co mprising~~ comprising rubber components, ~~which, in order to make~~ comprising making at least one of said rubber components~~, includes~~by the method according to claim 1.

7. (original) A pneumatic tire comprising rubber components at least one of which is made by the method according to claim 1.

8. (new) A method of making a tire rubber component according to claim 1, wherein

the allotted widths of the unvulcanized rubber strips are gradually decreased from the radially innermost strip to the radially outermost strip.

9. (new) A method of making an annular rubber component of a tire comprising

determining a cross sectional shape of an annular rubber component,

allotting thicknesses, widths and lengths to unvulcanized rubber strips, based on the determined cross sectional shape of the annular rubber component, said thicknesses being in a range of from 0.5 to 4.0 mm,

making said unvulcanized rubber strips having the allotted thicknesses, widths and lengths,

determining relative displacement of circumferential ends of said unvulcanized rubber strips,

making a layered structure of said unvulcanized rubber strips by disposing said unvulcanized rubber strips upon one another so that the circumferential ends of said unvulcanized rubber strips have the determined relative displacement, wherein the first circumferential ends on one side of the layered structure are gradually shifted from a radially innermost strip to a radially outermost strip, and the second circumferential ends on the other

side of the layered structure are gradually shifted in the reversed manner to the first circumferential ends,

winding said layered structure once around a drum, and

connecting the circumferential ends of the wound layered structure each other by butt joint the first circumferential ends with the second circumferential ends, respectively, so that the butt-joints of said unvulcanized rubber strips are shifted from each other in the circumferential direction;

wherein an angle α defining the angular circumferential shift between the butt-joints of the adjacent unvulcanized rubber strips in the annular rubber component is not less than 5 degrees, and

an angle β defining the angular circumferential shift between the butt-joint of the radially innermost unvulcanized rubber strip and the butt-joint of the radially outermost unvulcanized rubber strip and encompassing the butt-joints is not more than 180 degrees.

10. (new) A method of making a tire rubber component according to claim 9, wherein the unvulcanized rubber strips are allotted the same widths.

11. (new) A method of making a tire rubber component according to claim 9, wherein

said unvulcanized rubber strips in the layered structure include two or more unvulcanized rubber strips which are different from each other with respect to rubber composition.

12. (new) A method of making a tire rubber component according to claim 9, wherein

the allotted widths of the unvulcanized rubber strips are gradually decreased from the radially innermost strip to the radially outermost strip.

13. (new) The method of claim 1, in which α is at least 15 degrees.

14. (new) The method of claim 1, in which β is at most 90 degrees.

15. (new) The method of claim 13, in which β is at most 90 degrees.

16. (new) The method of claim 10, in which in which α is at least 15 degrees.

17. (new) The method of claim 10, in which β is at most 90 degrees.

18. (new) The method of claim 17, in which β is at most 90 degrees.

19. (new) The tire of claim 7, in which β is at most 90 degrees.

20. (new) The tire of claim 7, in which α is at least 15 degrees.

21. (new) The tire of claim 19, in which α is at least 15 degrees.